

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 6157

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ECON, ELAB, PINT, RO
SUBJECT: CONGRESS OF WORKING PEOPLE'S COUNCILS

REF: (A) BUCHAREST 5240, (B) BUCHAREST 3392

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SUMMARY. FIRST CONGRESS OF WORKING
PEOPLE'S COUNCILS IN INDUSTRY
CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION WAS HELD IN BUCHAREST,
JULY 11-13. NO CONCRETE RESULTS OR NEW DECISIONS WERE FORTHCOMING
FROM THE CONGRESS, OTHER THAN INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE CONGRESS
ITSELF. IN SPITE OF CONSIDERABLE RHETORIC PRAISING EVENT AS NEW
TRIMPH FOR "WORKERS DEMOCRACY," A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS MADE
TO ENHANCE ROLE OF WORKERS' COUNCILS WERE REJECTED. WORKERS'
COUNCILS REMAIN AS ORGANIZATION FORUMS
WHICH ENCOURAGE WORK DISCIPLINE AND FACILITATE
PLAN FULFILLMENT. APPARENT AIMS OF CONGRESS WERE TO OFFER CEAUSESCU
YET ANOTHER PODIUM TO EXPOUND ON DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL
/
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (SEE REFTTEL A), TO GRANT CEAUSESCU NOMINAL LEADERSHI
P
OVER ALL WORKERS THROUGH PRESIDENCIES OF CONGRESS AND NATIONAL
COUNCIL OF WORKING PEOPLE AND TO STAGE ONE MORE GRANDIOSE POLITICAL
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CIRCUS DURING THE 100TH YEAR CELEBRATION OF "ROMANIAN INDEPEND-
ENCE." END SUMMARY.

2. THE CONGRESS, CHAIRED BY CEAUSESCU, WAS ATTENDED BY
OVER 10,000 REPRESENTATIVES OF WORKERS COUNCILS AND GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES. OVER 650 SPEECHES WERE GIVEN IN VARIOUS PLENARY
AND WORKING GROUP SESSIONS. FOLLOWING AGENDA WAS ADOPTED AND

DISCUSSED SPECIFIC TO EACH MAJOR BRANCH OF INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY:

- (A) GROWING ROLE OF WORKING CLASS IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT;
- (B) FULFILLMENT AND OVERFULFILLMENT OF 1977 ANNUAL PLAN AND FYP;
- (C) IMPLEMENTATION OF INVESTMENT PLAN AND REDUCTION OF PRODUCTION COSTS;
- (D) NEED FOR ACCELERATION OF TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS IN INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION;
- (E) NEED FOR SUPERIOR LABOR ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING;
- (F) GRADUAL SHORTENING OF WORK WEEK;
- (G) RAISING LIVING STANDARD OF POPULATION.

CEAUSESCU PRESENTED OPENING AND CLOSING SPEECHES WHICH REVIEWED ROMANIA'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIO/POLITICAL PROGRESS (SEE REFTTEL A), IN ADDITION TO ACTIVITIES OF CONGRESS LISTED ABOVE.

3. PARTICIPANTS PROCLAIMED CONGRESS AS SUPREME FORUM FOR THOSE WHO WORK IN INDUSTRY WHICH WILL MEET EVERY FIVE YEARS. CEAUSESCU WAS UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS. A NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WORKING PEOPLE WAS ALSO FORMED UNDER CEAUSESCU'S LEADERSHIP TO BE PERMANENT MANAGEMENT, GUIDANCE AND CONTROL BODY OF WORKING PEOPLE'S COUNCILS. (NOTE: NO MENTION WAS MADE OF ANY SPECIFIC AUTHORITY DELEGATED TO THESE NEW ORGANIZATIONS.) PROPOSALS MADE TO GIVE WORKING PEOPLES' COUNCILS WITHIN INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISES VOICE IN PRICE SETTING AND PROMOTION OF PERSONNEL WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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REJECTED BY CEAUSESCU. RECOMMENDATION MADE BY CEAUSESCU THAT STAFF PEOPLE IN ALL ENTERPRISES SPEND AT LEAST HALF THEIR WORK TIME IN DIRECTLY PRODUCTIVE WORK WAS ENDORSED BY CONGRESS END UNCLASSIFIED

4. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL

COMMENT: CONGRESS OF WORKING PEOPLE'S COUNCILS WAS INDUSTRIAL SECTOR COUNTERPART TO FIRST CONGRESS OF AGRICULTURAL UNITS HELD IN APRIL (SEE REFTTEL B). ALTHOUGH HIGHLY REGARDED POLEXCO MEMBER VIRGIL TROFIN (FIRST SECRETARY OF BRASOV JUDET) TOLD AMBASSADOR IN FEBRUARY THAT WORKERS' CONGRESS WOULD BE "SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL EVENT," IT WAS LONG ON RHETORIC AND SHORT ON RESULTS, AS WAS CASE FOR AGRICULTURAL CONGRESS. OFFICIAL AIM OF CONGRESS WAS TO LAUD ROMANIA'S WORKERS' DEMOCRACY AND TO ENCOURAGE WORKER "SELF MANAGEMENT"

" THROUGH ROLE OF WORKERS' COUNCILS. IN RETROSPECT, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS DOUBTFUL THAT MANY ROMANIAN WORKERS WERE FOOLED BY WHAT BECAME A "DOG AND PONY SHOW" SINCE NOT ONE SINGLE DECISION GIVING MORE AUTHORITY TO WORKERS' COUNCILS WAS MADE. COMMENT MADE TO EMBOFF BY ONE ROMANIAN WHICH WE FEEL TYPIFIES LOCAL ATTITUDE TOWARD CONGRESS WAS "A LARGE MASQUERADE."

5. IN WAKE OF CONGRESS, ENTERPRISE COUNCILS

REMAIN SAME "RUBBER STAMPING OPERATIONS" OF GOR POLICIES
THEY HAVE BEEN SINCE INCEPTION 8 YEARS AGO. COUNCILS PURPORTEDLY
DO HAVE SOME INPUT IN ESTABLISHING PLAN TARGETS AND TRANSLATING
CENTRAL POLICIES TO ENTERPRISE LEVEL, BUT DECISION ARE SUBJECT
TO FINAL APPROVAL BY RESPECTIVE MINISTRIES AND CENTRALS AND
WORKER INPUT IS LIMITED. DURING RECENT PLANT VISIT EMBOFF WAS TOLD
THAT THE PRESIDENT OF EACH WORKERS' COUNCIL IS ENTERPRISE DIRECTOR
(APPOINTED BY THE MINISTRY) AND THAT IN ALL COUNCIL AFFAIRS PRESIDENT
HAS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY COUNCIL DECISIONS.

6. FROM CEAUSESCU'S CLOSING SPEECH IT IS APPARENT THAT SOME
CONGRESS REPRESENTATIVES MISTAKENLY BELIEVED PREPARATORY RHETORIC
HERALDING GROWTH OF WORKER SELF-MANAGEMENT, SINCE CEAUSESCU
DEVOTED MAJOR PORTION OF SPEECH TO EXPLANATION OF WHY DECISIONS
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IN PRICE SETTING AND PROMOTION OF PERSONNEL COULD NOT BE LEFT
TO WORKERS' COUNCILS. FRG AMBASSADOR REPORTED THAT "BOOING"
TOOK PLACE DURING SESSION OF CONGRESS WHEN CSP SPOKESMAN DEFENDED
CENTRALIZED PRICE SETTING AND CEAUSESCU WAS REPEATEDLY REQUIRED TO
COME FORTH AND RESTORE ORDER. FOR TIME BEING "WORKERS DEMOCRACY"
AND "SELF MANAGEMENT" WILL REMAIN OFT-USED PHRASES WITH LITTLE REAL
MEANING OTHER THAN ENDORSEMENT AND FACILITATION OF GOR POLICIES.
END COMMENT. END CONFIDENTIAL.
BARNES

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